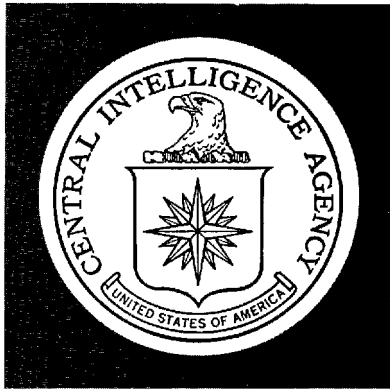


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Next 3 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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NATO: A consensus is developing within the Alliance in favor of high-level meetings to consider the implications of the Soviet move into Czechoslovakia.

The NATO permanent representatives will probably agree today on a special meeting of the North Atlantic Council to be held later this month. At this meeting, permanent delegations may be reinforced by senior representatives of their home governments, and will probably decide to advance the date of the ministerial meetings presently scheduled for December.

The suggestion that the Council meet at the foreign minister level in New York during the opening days of the UN General Assembly in October has received no support, but there is backing for an informal meeting of any Alliance foreign ministers present.

The Germans, who are deeply concerned about the presence of substantial Soviet forces opposite Bavaria, are particularly anxious to have the ministerial meetings moved up, and have suggested 12 November as a starting date. The Germans also hope the ministers will consider a proposal that members agree not to exercise, for a period of several years, the right of withdrawal from the Alliance, an option that opens next August.

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Next 6 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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